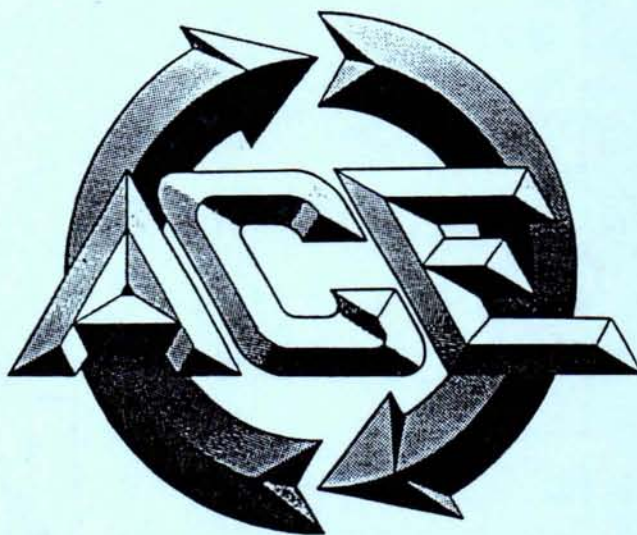


FEEDBACK

ADELAIDE ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

AN



GROUP

ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

IN THIS ISSUE

REVIEW OF MINI OFFICE II
UPDATE ON NEW ST TOS ROMS
GEM TREASURES IN BASIC

enthusiastic membership. Details may be obtained from the Secretary or by e-mailing. All enquiries are welcome.

Back issues of FEEDBACK are available as follows: Issues 1 - 7 (bound together) \$1.00 members, or \$1.50 non-members. Issue 8 onwards, 60c each, members, or \$1.00 each, non-members - plus post/packing if necessary.

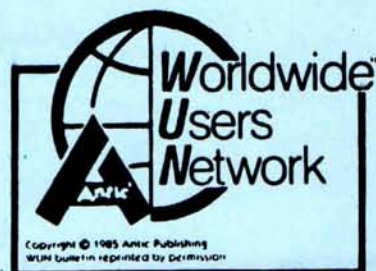
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Meetings are held on the *First Monday* of each month (or *second* if the first clashes with a public holiday), at Gilies Street Primary School, City; and the *Third Monday* of each month at Modbury West Primary School (cnr Wright/Kelly Roads, Main Building).

ILLEGAL COPYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT CLUB MEETINGS.

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P R E S I D E N T ' S B Y T E

Firstly, for the new Club Year, a welcome to our new Committee Members, and an invitation to others to help fill the gaps which remain. The post of Vice-President remains unfilled. A Programme Director for meeting demonstrations would meet a real need for more formal meetings as the Club grows in size. And it will grow in size if the demonstrations continue to include venues like the Computers for Education Conference in Adelaide recently.

Part of the discussion at our last meeting centred on the difficulties involved in importing computers and software into Australia. When to Postal and Transport and Customs and Organizational difficulties, is added a government attitude which seems determined to keep low-cost computing out of Australia.

In discussing the 1987 PCW Show with Michael Wilkinson I gained the impression that it differed from Australian Computer Shows mainly as a matter of scale. Not just the scale difference between 16 and 64 million population, more the difference between a society in which a tiny portion of the population is computer literate, and a society in which All with the faintest interest can become literate. Among the individual stalls were competing specialists for the smallest area, disks, labels, public-domain, specific types of games software and on and on in endless variety. Most visitors only saw half the show. Where Australian displays have gone to great lengths to keep school-children and users out of computer shows, and restrict visitors to purchasers of computer equipment for commercial use, the PCW Show was divided into one section for business computing, and another far larger section for consumer computing. I believe we need this approach in Australia where we quite clearly have too many exhibitions aimed at business users, and none aimed at consumer computing.

At the PCW show an enormous Atari World literally overshadowed the consumer exhibition. On two occasions we have seen Atari provide professional displays at Australian exhibitions, but we cannot hope to approach the scale of this display in Australia until we develop the programmers, developers and distributors of software needed to support Atari hardware. We cannot afford to have the supply of Atari software in Australia strangled by a few big distributors with high costs and high profit margins. The Australian Government does not understand that punitive taxes and regulations are severely restricting the application of computer power within our society and pushing users of established brands into illegality. Atari and the clone-makers are dealing with the hardware part of the problem, how can we tackle the software side? Until we have the same thriving software industry in Australia we are doomed to remain the poor cousins of the computer world. I am convinced that there are resources in Australia which could support such an industry, but we have to get away from depending on software imports, not by wiping out computing, but by producing better products that we can sell to the rest of the world.

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

Both meetings in January 1988 are to be held at Gillies Street primary school.

ODDS & ENDS.

A number of interesting items are coming in again and for some of them we have to thank the visitors to the conference on "Computers in Education". Firstly we have to thank Neil Watkins-Editor of MACE'S Australian Atari Gazette, who not only brought news of Victoria but also was the bearer of gifts from the Melbourne Atari Computer Enthusiasts for which we offer most grateful thanks.

Also visiting was Roger Campbell from Audio Logic and I had a most interesting discussion on the use of Atari computers in the music world, and the software we can hope to see released in the near future.

MACE are also handling two interesting Products for the Computer corner. I realise that few of our members run the risk of suffering from "Kangaroo Paw" as the less forgiving members of our community know Repetitive Strain Injury, but one of the ways of avoiding damage is to use a Wrist Rest and MACE are handling a range of Custom Rests. The idea has not found favour with traditionally trained typists but certainly I have used the technique and am sure it will help those who can treat a keyboard as a set of switches to be operated, rather than something to be punished.

Protection of a different kind is provided by The Button Spike protector, and this certainly is a device which could repay it's cost many times over. I can not comment on the effectiveness of the device as I don't know it's surge absorbing capability, but I can testify that Electricity Supply authorities cannot prevent various forms of outside interference from being imposed on the normal mains power. Few of these forms are quite as destructive as lightning but the innards of our computers can be severely damaged by very small amounts of the wrong kind of electricity, and any device which restricts damage is worth consideration. The price involved is much less than you will pay for the heavyweight filters usually offered for the job.

From New Zealand via Dick Smith Bits & Bytes is a computer magazine which now includes an Atari column and it is for 8-bit users. Now of course the Dick Smith stores will be carrying both the 130XE and a range of cartridges, and in the near future we hope to see XC12 cassettes and XF551 disk drives.

The September issue of COMPUTE! escaped the clutches of Australia Post and makes interesting reading, particularly between the lines. A series about unusual software catalogues a wide range of programmes for the 8-bit Atari systems and a few for the ST series. Other magazines for September have that "I'm sure I've seen that before" feeling. However cartridges for the Flight Simulator and for SpartaDos as well as many new games are suitable additions to the array of good cartridges available. New hardware ideas from America are interesting but with the prices converted from the \$US to the "Pacific Peso" don't hold your breath waiting for an Australian dealer to offer them. One final breath of hope remains as the Big Names in American software return to releasing new titles for the 8-bit Ataris.

Neil Patterson

TOS ROMS BLITTER VERSION

Reprinted from STUN, Utah, October 1987.

The 1987 revision of TOS is scheduled for release in conjunction with the new "blitter" chip. The new TOS has been upgraded to include support for the hardware blit as well as retaining the software blit functions for full compatibility with older software which relies on hardware timing (a definite no-no). Changes in the new ROMs are:

RS232

The RS232 handler has been completely rewritten. RTS/CTS handshaking now works. Baud rates 50 and 75 now work.

CLOCK:

Support is now included for the Mega ST's built in battery backer-up realtime clock. The realtime clock is automatically used by the XBIOS gettime and settime functions for the IKBD. The GEMDOS clock is reset from the realtime clock at the termination of every program.

STARTUP:

Memory clear at system startup is much faster, improving performance on multi-megabyte systems.

DESKTOP:

The desktop now includes a control for deactivating and activating the blitter chip. Also the Save Desktop and Print Screen selections will request confirmation. Spurious characters are no longer written to the DESKTOP.INF file. Doing a PRINT or SHOW from the desktop will now display characters with ASCII codes above 127. SHOW and PRINT use a larger buffer now. Single drive copies now require fewer disk swaps.

CART:

Cartridge handling has been revised, eliminating the need for "CARTSTART" code and allowing .TOS and .TTP programs. Lower case letters will now be accepted and passed to an application from the "Open Application ... Parameter" box.

AES:

The AES will now send repeat clicks if the mouse button is held down on the arrow or page controls of a window, which lets a window smooth scroll. The AES underscore bug is now fixed. APPLDTPLAY and APPLDTRECORD now work. The limit of 30 characters on a line in an alert box is now rigidly enforced.

MOUSE:

The mouse redraw can now be set to XOR mode. The system will return after a single click. If this is what was requested.

DMA:

The DMA bus can now have more than one device attached at powerup time, without any special software.

FLOPPY DISK:

The floppy read/write code checks for more errors now. In prior versions, the system would not report a CRC error under certain circumstances; now it will. This hurts some copy protection schemes. The format of the floppy disk has been skewed from track to track to improve disk speed; the XBIOS supports this by using -1 for

table in the previously unused longword.

VDI:

The VDI will now draw arcs with small angles.

BIOS:

Character out routines are much faster.

BLITTER:

Automatic blitter chip support is included in line-A and VDI calls. The extended inquire will report a larger performance factor than before, allowing applications to check for the presence of the blitter. A new XBIOS call has been added to check for the blitter and to activate or deactivate it. The blit is not reentrant -- line-A and VDI should not be called from within an interrupt.

REGISTER:

The registers DO,D1,D2,A0,A1,A2 have always been forfeit when a trap call was made. Now the demise of these occurs under more conditions than before.

MEMORY:

Slightly more RAM is used by the system. Programs that were close to the edge on a 520ST may no longer fit.

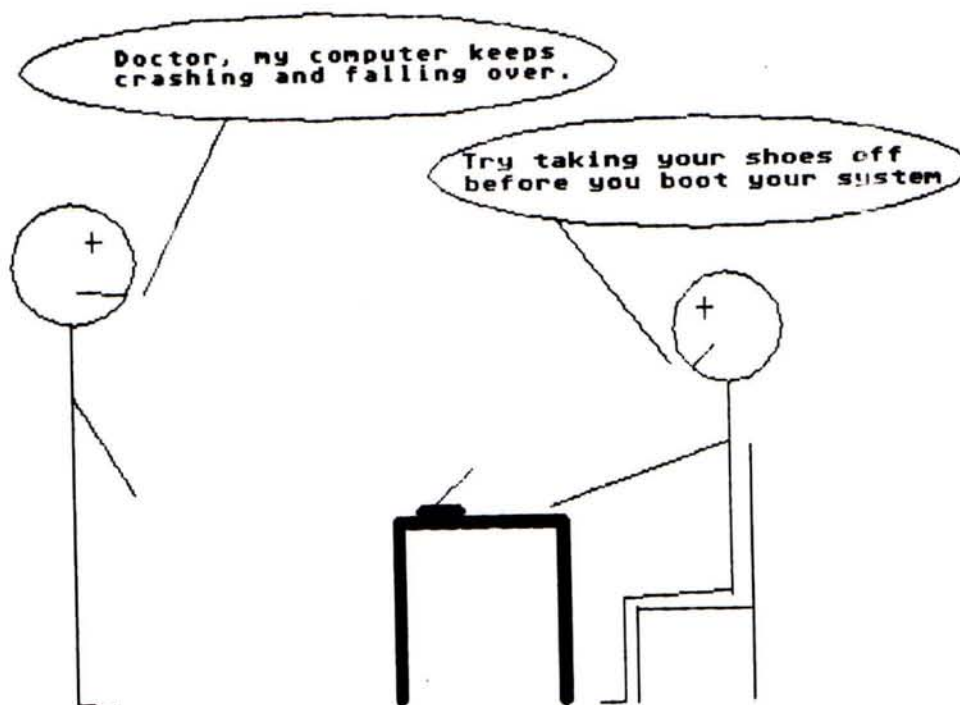
VARIABLE:

Most undocumented system variables have been moved. You were warned!

NOTES AND WARNINGS:

1. Some programs depend on the OS always being at \$FC0000. This is "not" cast in stone and will probably change soon. To find the OS header, use the pointer "sysbase" as documented.

DOCTARI



REVIEW OF MINI OFFICE II by Jesse James

MO2 is an integrated business package incorporating Word Processor, Database, Spreadsheet, Graphics, Communications and Label printer. Came on a double sided disk and requires at least 49K on 400/800/XL/XE.

The package is menu driven, and a 73 page manual keeps things on course. The Help key provides exactly that for the WP and Spreadsheet.

WORD PROCESSOR

Firstly it reads Atariwriter files so only formats need change. In Edit, two lines at the top of the screen show Time spent in Edit mode, Number of words typed, Memory available (in characters), Insert or Overwrite mode (default is Insert), and Upper or Lower case (default Lower).

The Option, Select and Start keys can change screen colours; formatting commands in text mode use the Shift and/or Control with text keys, e.g. to go to the end of the text : Shift + Control + E.

Essential learning is Shift/Control/W (to Save text). To answer the obvious, Shift/Control/S displays the typing speed. The disk drive & filename only need to be entered once. Subsequent Saves require only the Save command with double <Return> followed by "O" for overwrite or a "B" for backup.

It is possible to Merge, Search & Replace, Move/Copy/Delete selected blocks of text, and if you wish display the number of words in a block. Preview of printed text is shown in 80 column style, and the complete document can scroll automatically if desired. Not as easy to read, but it does give a better impression of overall layout.

An additional feature is Mail Merge. Information from a database can be printed into a standard letter. I set up a database with the names and addresses of sample companies, then wrote a letter advising my new address. I was then able to print copies of the letter with each Company name and address coming from the database. Printing is slower with the 1027 Printer, but manageable with the pause facility.

Printing files in succession is possible, with the pages being numbered sequentially. Thus the pages printed in one automatic run is only limited by the disc storage and the style of printer. Ideal for writing a life history!

DATABASE

To give some idea of just how big a database is possible, my database file above contained 5 fields with 25+20+15+4+16 characters. It was possible to enter 754 records using those size fields. Other examples: 8 fields with 40 characters each will allow 156 records, while 20 fields of 10 characters each would allow 310 records. I set the field size with at least the number of characters in the chosen name to ensure the full field name is printed.

Fields may be set up as Alpha (eg Name), Decimal (eg 16.251), Integer (eg 99), Date (DD/MM/YY format) or Formula (where calculations may be made based on other numeric fields). It is possible to sort the database on any field, in ascending or descending order.

Printing of the database can be restricted to nominated fields, and can be in vertical (one complete record at a time) or horizontal (column list) style, with or without field names. A selected part of the database can be printed by marking appropriate records. A Search option provides for marking of all records that meet selected criteria.

SPREADSHEET

Has a maximum size 52 Columns and 85 Rows. Columns seem adequate, but heavy use may require the Rows to be spread over successive files. The default spreadsheet size is 15 Columns by 20 Rows.

With the default Column width of 7 (Max 18), four columns are displayed. A change to 8 displays three.

One thing to watch when inserting a row: In the bottom row I had typical formulas like $C16=C5\#C14/9$. I inserted a new row 6 and entered my values, and the bottom line formula then read $C17=C5\#C15/9$. The first part had automatically changed, but the dividing number had not changed to 10. (NOTE: The crosshatch shows as a Pound Sign in the WP.)

It is possible to write more into a column by using CTRL T (additional text overlapping columns to the right). I used this for a heading. CTRL C allows calculations to be made with the result then going into the nominated cell, and CTRL R returns the previous figure entered. There are some neat options involving every alpha character, which no doubt would interest the serious Spreadsheet operator.

GRAPHICS

This module displays graphs/pie charts of Spreadsheet data or other values keyed in.

To use Spreadsheet data, it must first be saved as a graphics file. Full benefit is only possible with a graphics printer so I was unable to test the full potential. Up to three data-sets can be used in a combination and the order of plotting can be nominated. Titles can be added after the graphs are drawn.

The graph screens can be saved, and a good feature is the ability to transfer a graph into the Word Processor and use it between text.

COMMUNICATIONS

To those of us without a modem, this module is, at the moment, of interest value only. Later maybe.

LABEL PRINTER

Printing labels using the database was not difficult. The format is set up on screen in a pseudo label, after the label size has been set. Each database field required is entered in inverse video in the appropriate line. Any text can be added to the label if desired. The label editor can also be used to print any number of identical labels to a user format.

The number of labels to be printed shows automatically as the number of database records. To get duplicate labels, this number needs only to be doubled. That figure counts down during printing.

THE WRAP:

While there is a sameness about the menus in each module (suggest different background colours), I give full marks to Mini Office II and hereby nominate it for the AACC Fuji award! The capabilities of the six programs were surprising at times, and it looks just the goods to package with the 130XE. For half the price I paid for Atariwriter, I now have the database and spreadsheet I looked for, and more. My thanks goes to Michael Wilkinson, for my renewed interest in the humble 8 bit machine.

VOTED BEST VALUE

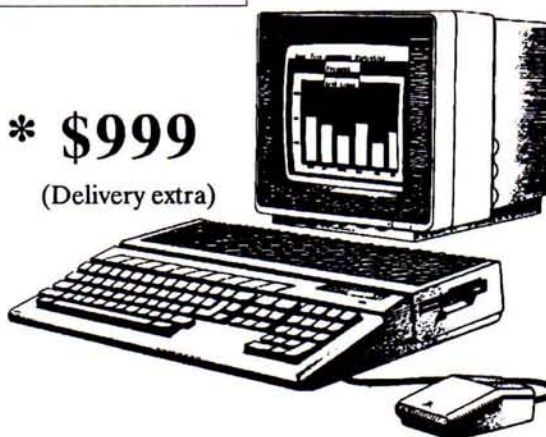
For two consecutive years ATARI ST Personal Computers have been voted *"the best hardware value for the year"* by Infoworld Magazine in the U.S. and, more recently Byte Magazine stated *"the ST wins hands down..."*

**DUE TO DEMAND
OFFER EXTENDED UNTIL
19TH DECEMBER 1987**

Now you can own one of the world's fastest selling 16/32 bit computers for less than many of the 8 bit brands. The Atari ST takes personal computing technology almost to its limit. It's perfect for word processing, database management, music composition, spreadsheets, graphic design and CAD applications, desktop publishing, education, recreation and more.

*** \$999**

(Delivery extra)



*** Includes: 520 STFM Computer, built-in disk drive,
mouse, software and disks.**

FREE MONO MONITOR (Worth \$500).

To receive your Atari ST in time for Christmas fill out the order form and return it to **Kent Town Computers, 47 Fullarton Rd, Kent Town. S.A. 5067 PHONE 363 1755**

PLEASE CHARGE MY: ☐ BANKCARD ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ VISA

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Signature _____ Expiry Date _____

Name _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Phone _____

CLUB ST

This report on the use of the Club 520 ST computer donated by Mobex will not exactly be encouraging to Gillian Franklin, and even although she now has other important things to worry about, maybe some attention paid to the service problems for all who are not Sydney residents will not go amiss.

The initial information for this report is on 3 1/2 inch disk but inaccessible to me at the moment. I set the machine up at work alongside an Olivetti M24 computer, one of the best, but certainly not the cheapest IBM compatible computers on the market at present. Typists and technical staff were impressed by the ease of operating the GEM desktop and commented very favourably on the monochrome display. Using First Word, it was most interesting to find that the typists had more trouble with the mouse than the technical staff. They are presently using an introductory word processor, which is a South Australian invention now being sold around the world. The "Glass Typewriter" by Microbyte plugs into a conventional electronic typewriter and provides menu driven disk storage for documents.

At first glance there are 16 commands available, so facilities are restricted, but the small step from the typewriter brings rapid converts when minor changes to a document no longer require a complete retype. With careful siting and non-reflective mesh screens the display is as good as possible at a 50 Hz refresh rate but at present there are many features available in a modern word processor not present in this system. Spelling check facilities, advanced editing and layout capabilities, handling of large documents and the insertion of graphics are all facilities which are required at some time, and low brilliance screens do provide real problems in an office brilliantly lit with fluorescent lamps. All in all the additional facilities would provide another large step forward, and there is no doubt of the reaction from the USER level.

From a technical point of view the old problem reared it's head. For maximum value it must be possible to take files from an IBM compatible and process them on any personal computer, one of the first problems addressed when the ST appeared is still a key to many sales decisions and the performance of PC-Ditto could be crucial in achieving sales.

Club members who do not work in a compatible environment cannot appreciate how much this "lowest common denominator" will affect the future of ATARI, but certainly current ATARI management have some appreciation of the problem. Until ST owners can prove significant gains by taking information from compatibles and providing high grade output in a fraction of the time, many offices will ignore the greater power and more productive software on other systems. Information on the conversion of DIF files, WKS files and the various DB files for processing on ST software will be a major resource in this task. Wherever the ST user has the facilities and resources to provide himself with a second machine at work, I agree, the problem disappears, but in the real world, most users have neither space nor money to use ST power at work.

Back into The Tale of Woe. During my first serious session of demonstrating First Word the left hand side of the screen collapsed, so that the page marker was not visible, in fact the first 3 characters on the desktop were just a solid black line on the left of the screen. The fault is not common but certainly not unique and as

time went on it developed from an initial appearance sometimes after the monitor had been on for at least 2 hours to almost always present at switch on. Since the fault was firm and within the warranty period I contacted Atari and was told to return the monitor to Datronics for repair.

The fault is about the simplest kind of fault which could occur, and any person with the proper training could go to the particular circuit elements and examine them with basic test equipment. There is no requirement to have learnt about the circuit from the man who invented it. Two other trained technicians identified this as a 15 minute job. So that is what Datronics did and quite possibly they did it correctly, but when the Monitor was returned to me some three weeks later my first reaction was to complain that the display was 11mm off-centre, only to discover some 2 hours later cracks opening up in the front panel surrounding the screen. Careful examination of the original packing in which the monitor had been despatched did not reveal any obvious signs of major damage to the packing but one corner appeared to have been slightly crushed. Fragile labels were prominent on the pack but we have to assume that it had been used to support a heavy load.

Since this time, we have been trying to get the damage repaired and in the end Atari have told us they will replace the monitor while they continue to try and get a replacement escutcheon to replace the one which was damaged. So we have sent the damaged monitor off to Sydney and are still without a useable club ST, although we now have an offer from a Club member to lend his monochrome monitor so that demonstrations can continue. I will leave Peter Gibson to continue this tale of woe with his chapter and just conclude mine by trying to spell out the lessons which have to be learnt from this episode.

Don't take any notice of those who tell you that Atari make junk. The quality of the systems now being delivered is definitely above average for commercial electronics, regardless of the extremely low price. With Atari we can expect the normal rules to apply. Most of the faults which appear in new equipment are trivial and can be fixed by a competent technician in minutes. They fall into the same category as the loose bolt in the bumper bar of a newly delivered car. They should be fixed locally at minimum cost to the purchaser, (time lost) the vendor and ATARI. Occasionally a circuit fault in the computer will demand skilled and experienced technicians with full diagnostic programmes and equipment to trace and repair. These are the faults that need to take the risk involved in transport across Australia, but even this should not involve the shipping of the monitor. The computer itself is rugged and light and far less liable to damage, and of course far more complex. What has generally been an effective demonstration to all levels of an organization has been marred by a general problem which Atari need to solve.

Neil Patterson

Printer Ribbon Re-inking

Most fabric dot matrix printer ribbons can be re-inked from 5 to 50 times depending on the quality of the ribbon. If ribbons are re-inked before they become totally dry they will last longer. Many print heads rely on partial lubrication from the ribbon ink, therefore, if the ribbon is allowed to become too dry, some of this lubrication is lost. Many people tend to allow this to happen in order to get the most out of their ribbon. This is understandable due to the high cost of ribbons. The solution? re-ink your ribbons for less than a third of the price of a new ribbon. We can re-ink most of the popular cartridge type ribbons.



Well, its that time of the month again - the Editor is pining for articles for the magazine.

This article will 'stray' a little from normal format in that firstly, each column will be in a different font, and secondly it will be laser printed prior to being sent to the printers for offset reproduction.

The reason for this is that I love Publishing Partner, there are now many fonts available and the ready access to a laser printer will enhance the looks - thus is a good (I hope) advert for PP and the ST - thanks to Kent Town Computers for the use of their HP LaserJet plus (300dpi) compatible printer!

Now to the news!.....

The Atari PC has arrived. This is the first of the compatibles and is the 'Entry Level' machine. It features the 8088 cpu with switchable clock speed between 4.77 and 8Mhz. It has 512K RAM expandable to 640K (socketed for a 8087 maths co-processor). Graphics modes are built-in as standard and offer IBM monochrome, Hercules, CGA and EGA thus without the need for other cards. It has a 360K 5 1/4" floppy drive built-in and option of fitting a second drive. A standard ST 3 1/2" drive will interface. The keyboard is XT style and mouse is supplied. No monitor is provided at this stage - but the price? - only \$999.

This PC **WILL** be demonstrated at the December meeting of the Club (7th Dec. Gilles St). Dealers can order immediately through Atari Computers.

Availability of the remainder of the new products - SLM804, MEGA ST2/ST4 and XECS is expected before Xmas. Other good news is that the initial ST

promotion which officially ended 30th October *has been extended by demand to the 19th December*. Yes, you still have time to buy and tell all of your friends of this offer - the complete 520ST - now with 360K drive and power supply built-in and Hi-Res mono monitor for \$999. Other prices for colour/1040 as per the previous offer. This is a great campaign and has already seen many many new ST owners throughout Australia.

As to software - well it is improving. The best range is still at Highbury Computers, closely followed by IBAS Computers (yes believe it or not) and NorthEast Computers. SpaceLand (Salisbury have a few titles - including TerrorPods) and Kent Town Computers have supplies of PC-Ditto the IBM Emulator.

MicroBase Computers in WA certainly have the best and up-to-date range of software and offer overnight delivery. I spoke to the Manager on Friday and he had just returned from the giant PCW Show in London. He was flabbergasted by the amount of software and has a HUGE amount due in within 2 weeks - if you want a certain title then check with them to see if they have it. By the way, they ring the UK for orders each Thursday night so if you do want something its a good bet to contact them.

Computer Oasis also have a large range and their list is on the bulletin board - Oasis 5 - can be ordered through Micro Accessories in Elizabeth.

We have also received the software list from Mega ST Computers in Melbourne. Their list shows some 1400 titles, all available within 2 weeks of ordering.

And while we are talking about the bulletin board - if you have a modem then why not join Oasis 5, where we

have our own section for 8-bits, ST's and general message base. This board offers membership for \$10 six months and \$15 for a full year.



Comdex, one of the really big US Shows has just finished. Unfortunately, it is still too early to receive full press reports on what our Atari did show, however, a little phone call to a contact did enlighten the situation.

Atari did show the transputer computer as reported in Australian Personal Computing magazine (October 1987). This highly advanced workstation produced by Perihellon (UK) will ensure Atari's stated philosophy of being in the forefront of technology at an affordable price. Also shown was a UNIX multi-user machine using the 68000 - but I am not sure whether it is an add on to the ST or a stand-alone. Full reports are on the way in time for the next magazine.

Atari also had a FULL range of IBM-compatible machines. They expect sales of their XECS (8-bit) to reach 120,000 by Xmas (whewww).

Again stated was the intention to show at next years Hanover (around March/April) Show, a new Atari TT (thirtytwo bit) running on a 68030 cpu.

And thats about enough for now. Meanwhile deliveries of the Mega's complete with blitter chip are now being shipped in quantity in the UK, and supplies are increasing in the US and Canada.

Atari UK had the largest exhibit at the PCW Show with 43 companies supporting. New products included the £2500 desktop publishing system. Atari UK will release a low cost CD-ROM for under £400 next year which will also play audio, hold 600MB of data and transfer data at 1.5 Mbits per second.

WordPerfect has been released for

199 in the UK. The version is compatible with 4.1 and 4.2 on the IBM and other computers and allows direct file transfer between the two environments. This package fully supports GEM and includes all of the original programs main features such as automatic save to disc, 115,000 word dictionary, thesaurus, maths, macros to speed up repetitive tasks, three-level undelete, automatic paragraph numbering, text columns, sort and merge and table of contents or index generation. Keyboard or mouse operation.

Precision Software (UK) have also released a new advanced database called Superbase Professional. This one gives all the tools needed for a complete software environment including a unique forms editor allowing the creation of multi-page forms combining colour, lines, boxes and text at will. Special editing aids are featured and graphics can easily be integrated to give the look of customised stationery. According to the company "Superbase Professional is a revolution; if you can think it, this program will do it."

The program uses a Database Management Language devised to make it easy for the non programmer to create powerful applications while at the same time offering an astounding 200 commands. At the highest level, replacement pull-down menus can be produced and many other customising features such as personalised pop-up selection panels.

Digital Research (designers of GEM) have at long last (better late than never?) launched GEM Write, GEM Paint, GEM Draw Plus, GEM Graph and GEM WordChart for the St all priced at £99.95. They also promise to release GEM Desktop Publisher before the end of this year!

a supposed programmer for Microprose (US), addressed to all Amigans. The crux of the message was that Amiga owners should stop copying software and BUY it. The reason given was that Microprose and other software developers would, this Xmas, tend to support the computer which sold best (not necessarily the best computer). If Amigans did not want 'ST hand-me-down software' then the message was clear - BUY it or suffer the consequences.

I really do have to smile at this message since it is very clear that the ST IS winning the battle of sales and thus the software development. But ST owners must also not be lulled into a false sense of security here - the message is the same - BUY it, do not copy it.

And if you say, 'where?', well I've already stated a few sources. There are plenty of reviews of software in the various magazines to give you a good idea of what it may do.

Now, back to the software news, I can only say that the explosion has occurred. There must at least 50 new titles, previously unknown, within the last month.

I will try to give you some idea.

One of the most exciting programs comes from Antic Publishing (US). It is called *SPECTRUM 512*. Of interest to artists, this is a 512-colour (on screen at once) full-featured paint program, costing only \$69.95 (US).

This software only program has to be seen to be believed - rich colours, no flicker, no faking, no fooling with perceived resolution increased *threefold*. *S512* (my short title) gives you 48 colours per scan line. Some of the features/tools are: freehand 'pen' drawing, 'rubber line' and

- patterned or solid; fill new; 20 predefined and 20 user-defined patterns; 38 brush shapes - solid or patterned; user definable brushes; auto-align patterns or pixel offset for overlap; airbrush - 4 sizes, 9 flow speeds; undo buffer; Anti-aliasing - Zag-out/Blur/no Zag; save/load custom palettes; fixed or floating color menus for auto-colour adjustment; change last painted colour to any of 512; Auto-create smooth colour ranges between any 2 or more colours; colour cycle paint flow through any range of colours - brush/airbrush; fantastic colour edit mode; magnify window for all functions; 12-screen (in 1 Meg machine) scrollable cut & paste buffer; 4-way flip and scale and a programmable slide-show program to display your S512 artwork.

S512 loads Degas, CAD-3D, Neochrome and IFF Amiga pics.

Well that should interest a few people I know.

A PD disk of S512 art will be arriving very shortly!!



Now, as if that wasn't enough for all you graphic artists out there - and perhaps I shouldn't even mention this one - but I will - soon to be released from Eldersoft (UK) - the ST specialists is another new paint program this time allowing 4096 colours at once - YES you heard, 4096 colours on our ST. Called **QUANTUM PAINTBOX** this would have had to be the ultimate graphics utility to date on the ST. QP will offer everything to be expected in a standard paint package but using a revolutionary new process to display a maximum of 4096 true colours on screen at any one time with absolutely NO loss of resolution.

QP SCREENS will only be a few bytes longer than a standard DE GAS SCREEN (which can also be read). Special routines to allow you to use these screens in your own programs will be included. This looks like being a beauty.

Eidersoft say it will be another month or so before release date.



THE WRITERS of SPECTRUM512, TRIO ENGINEERING (US), ARE WORKING WITH DIGITAL VISION (US) ON A PAINT PROGRAM WHICH WILL ALLOW AN EFFECTIVE NUMBER OF ABOUT 25,000 COLOURS IN A DIGITISED PICTURE USING THE COMPUTER EYES HARDWARE.

And you thought the ST could not display more than 512 colours?

By the way, my copy of S512 has arrived, and looks good - it can also simulate approximately 3000 colours on screen!

ANTIC HAVE ALSO RELEASED CYBER PAINT, A COMBINATION PAINT/ANIMATION PROGRAM THAT'S COMPATIBLE WITH THE CYBER FAMILY. THIS IS A FRAME-BY-FRAME ANIMATOR WITH A LOT OF EXTRAS. (\$69.95 US).

NERIKI ENTERPRISES (Sydney) HAVE SHOWN THEIR POLAROID PALETTE SYSTEM ON THE ST AT THE RECENT COMDEX SHOW (SEE ANTIC REPORT).

SOFTWARE IS POURING OUT FOR THE ST WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF GAMES PREVIOUSLY UN-ANNOUNCED. I WILL TRY TO GIVE A BRIEF RESUME OF THE HAPPENINGS:

ACCESS SOFTWARE INC (US), OFFER AN ENHANCED VERSION OF ECHELON, A 3-D SPACE FLIGHT SIMULATOR. FEATURES INCLUDE: 4 DIFFERENT STATE-OF-THE ART WEAPONS SYSTEMS/BI-DIRECTIONAL TRANSPORTER UNIT/UNMANNED RPV CONTROL/ANTI-GRAVITY BRAKING AND HOVERING/FOWARD AND REVERSE THRUSTERS/TWIN 3-D SCREENS/REAL-TIME INFRARED VECTOR GRAPHICS/COMPUTER ASSISTED CONTROL SYSTEMS/ON BOARD SUB-ATOMIC ANALYZER/DECODER. THIS PROGRAM PURPORTS TO BE A TRUE 3-D SPACE FLIGHT SIMULATOR PUTTING YOU AT THE CONTROLS OF

Drive five of the world's most exotic cars in TEST DRIVE, the latest game from Accolade (US). The 5 are a Ferrari Testarossa, Lotus Turbo Esprit, Porsche 911 Turbo, Lamborghini Countach and a Corvette. 'Authentic graphics', sterling sound and lifelike animation allow you to sense the awesome characteristics of each machine. Note that the radar detector is operational, the rearview mirror does show what is behind, and the tachometer is showing revs. The program takes into account numerous features and vital statistics of the simulated car: suspension, brake status, fuel line, acceleration time and torque.

PINBALL WIZARD is also from Accolade. Comes with plenty of pinball tables for you to play and lets you create your own. Has a unique paint menu giving you the ability to customise each of your tables with your own designs and decorations.

From Go! (UK), comes BLUE WAR. I saw this at Spaceland on Saturday last. Just released, it is a submarine simulation that is supposed to be better than Silent Service and Gato. Check with them if you are interested.

FTL (US) are about to finish off RPV, a game based on the Atari coin-op Gravitar. But, this has the ability to hook up 2 ST's via a null modem cable and stage dogfights between the two. You will have full freedom of movement, except when dragged by gravity; limited fuel but you can refuel by landing next to a 'captured' fuel station and jamming a hose into it. Also provided will be a make-your-own-planet utility.

STAR TREK, The Rebel Universe, from Beyond Software (UK) IS released. This is a stupendous release. Two packages came to Highbury Computers and two were sold within an hour. Now, you knew Ron was looking for one didn't you?. This game defies a decent review and all I can say about it is - order one NOW, you will not regret it one bit. The graphics, sound and play are number one! \$75.

Jagware (US) are working on ALIEN FIRES, a role-playing game, with you as a time-lord, and mate environments

releasing more ST software at last. **EMPIRE** (from Interstel) is a tactical warfare game which is now shipping. Also out is the enhanced ST version of **MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET**, which has more features than the Amiga version. It includes MIDI in/out, Jukebox play mode, and waveform editing; complete music notation, six time signatures, transpose, cut, copy & paste, adjust tempo etc. An educational release is **COMPUTER MAD LIBS** (from First Byte) a mostly written story and using speech synthesis. Oh, **MARBLE MADNESS** is also due here any day now too.

Mindscape (US) have reportedly released the long awaited version of **DEFENDER OF THE CROWN** which will sport incredible graphics. If you've seen the Amiga version you'll know what I mean. **INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST** is an arcade-style game played within a four-story building viewed from the top down. Objective is to release captured Allied spies from the grips of their Nazi kidnappers.

From **Activision (US)** will come **PORTAL**, a graphic adventure. You will portray an astronaut having returned to Earth after a long mission to find all the people missing. Buildings, animals, birds, trees, lakes are present. An artificial intelligence named Homer is resident. Is it Earth though?

Spectrum Holobyte (US) will port over two of its Macintosh games, **FALCON** (a flight-combat

CLUB BACKGAMMON comes from California Dreams (US).

3 different size **GRAPHIC ART** **TABLETS** come from **E/O Products (US)**. They are 6" X 9" (\$395US), 12" X 12" (\$539US), and 12" X 18" (\$877US). The two larger ones come with a 4-button 'puck' for precision tracing and drafting.

Mitsubishi International (US) also have released a digitizer board called **GRAPHIC A1** and **A2**. These are in sizes 8" X 12" (\$395US) and 13" X 16.5" (\$595US) both with stylus. These are on sale through **Michfon** and **Quantum Microsystems Inc (US)**.

from **Timeworks (US)** comes their latest great offering, **THE TIMWORKS DESKTOP PUBLISHER**. This features automatic page style formatting, full featured word processor, wide variety of font styles in multiple sizes, built-in text editor, high resolution graphics, auto kerning, built-in patterns, textures and shades, and a complete set of drawing tools. This product is in addition to their 4 other ST products, **SwiftCalc**, **Word Writer**, **Data Manager** and **Partner ST**.

Yet another enhanced art program from **Beery's Bit Software (US)**, is **COLORBURST 3000**. This will create and view images of more than 1600 colors at once from a palette of 3375. These are distinct separate colours with no repetition necessary. **Degas** and **Neo pics** can be imported and a slideshow program is included.

The low cost is only \$19.95 US. Also from Beery's is **ORION'S RUN** (\$39.95US), a mouse controlled video game in the tradition of Xevious and Galaga - has good graphics; and **THE QUEST FOR MOLEY** a combination board and computer game.

Michtron (US) continue to be the most prolific ST software company with the release shortly of **GFA FILM**. This will require 1MB, TOS in ROM and colour. 3 kinds of files are used; picture files for background, sprite file containing the moving objects and the film file that contains the script for the action. Background can be a Degas, Neo or Newcolour screen. 4 graphic modes are supported; normal low res 16 colour/ normal medium res with 4 colours/ low res with 1088 colours divided into 68 palettes, or medium res with 272 colours divided into 68 palettes. Quick and easy animation can be accomplished using colour cycling in normal or enhanced colour modes. There is much more to this program but it will be memory intensive so the more memory you have the better. Michtron also have released **EASY PAGE** a desktop publishing program for £29.95UK and **MAKE-IT-MOVE** version 2.0 an animation package for Neo or Degas.

From MicroDeal (UK) comes **LEATHERNECK** an American Marines combat game, **TANGLEWOOD**, an adventure, **INTERNATIONAL SOCCER**, all at £19.95 and announce that **GOLDRUNNER 2** will be programmed.

Tynesoft (UK) have ST versions of **WINTER OLYMPIAD 88** and **FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX**.

Domark (UK) are releasing the original **TRIVIAL PURSUIT** but this version can be played through the MIDI port, NOT A

(what a title), and **STAR WARS**.

Another board game called **EYE** comes from Endurance Games (UK) and has been converted to the ST where it is challenging **Trivial Pursuit**.

RANARAMA, in which the player is required to guide a frog around a maze, comes from Hewson (UK), price £19.95UK.

Ocean (UK) a well known software company is about to release its first game for the ST called **ECO**. The player starts as an amoeba, evolves through fish and fauna stages and eventually achieves human status. £19.95UK.

Some people were a little disappointed with **Gauntlet** when it was released. I thought it was very good but then I don't go into arcade parlours. Well its makers **US Gold (UK)**, are now going to enhance it. **GAUNTLET 2** will be able to play with four players each equipped with a joystick. It will be designed to run faster by making the playing area smaller. All **Gauntlet** opponents remain but new ones including the fire breathing dragon and the IT creature will be added. Also from this big company is coming **CHARLIE CHAPLIN**, **OUTRUN**, a car race of gigantic proportions, and **TRANTOR - THE LAST STORM TROOPER**.

Another text and graphics adventure from Level 9 (UK) is **GNOME RANGER** - this is receiving good reviews. Priced at £14.95 it's good value.

From Rainbird (UK) shortly is **CARRIER COMMAND** £24.95UK.

Well, I'm running out of space: 2 printouts of **COMDEX** have arrived courtesy of our Sysop and this must go in so I will finish off this column for now.

The various fonts used in each column have been: Helvetica, Times, Columbia, Avant Garde, Devoll, Hudson, Spokane, Thames, 16-bit, Calligraphy, Courier and this last one is Helvetica Narrow. They have been for the most part 12 point normal style with titles in bold.

I'm also pleased to say that Softlogik, the makers of this fine desktop publishing program have announced Publishing Partner Professional

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ATARI MEANS BUSINESS
A REPORT FROM THE 1988
COMDEX

By Anita Malnig, START Editor

Las Vegas, November 2, 1987 --

Atari intends to give the likes of Sun Microsystems and Apollo Computers a run for the money with Abaq (the root word for abacus), the new transputer-based workstation that the company is showing here.

By using RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) architecture, the workstation will operate at 10 MIPS (million instructions per second). The latest graphics hardware and the IMS T-800 -- the Inmos Company's 32-bit microprocessor -- combine to form affordable, powerful personal workstations. A single transputer can deliver over ten times the power of an IBM PC AT. However, there's even greater strength in numbers. You can connect two, 10, 100 or even MORE transputers to create a relatively low-cost computer workstation with the power of a supercomputer. (Talk is that the price will be in the \$5000 range.) When attached to a transputer, the ST or Mega acts as the input/output device for the system. Transputers can be linked via a built-in high-speed serial port to form a multiprocessor array or a local area network.

Helios, the Unix-like operating system, was developed by the Perihelion Company in Great Britain, as was the transputer board itself. The Helios operating system encourages the use of many small programs which work together to create a final product.

Shiraz Shivji, Atari's vice president of research and development, expects that the transputer will be used primarily in engineering and science applications. Included with Abaq will be a very high resolution monitor, capable of four graphics modes: 1280 X 960 in 16 colors or monochrome; 1024 X 768 in 256

colors plus overlay. No firm delivery date is set, but late 1988 seems to be the most talked-about time frame. From a first-hand view, the crisp, vibrant graphics (such as four separate pictures running simultaneously) were drawing crushing crowds.

CD-ROM FOR ATARI

The exciting CD-ROM player introduced at Comdex can read up to 540 megabytes of data or play music. It connects to Atari's ST and Mega computers through the DMA (direct memory access) channel, a communications port that transmits data at up to 10 million bits per second. At 540Mb, the player can store more data than 1,000 floppy disks or 200,000 printed pages.

Demonstrated at the show is an English and French visual dictionary from Facts on File. It is categorized by topics such as transportation and food: click on the transportation theme and choose from an array of topics such as ferrys, container ships, airport terminals and so on -- all items illustrated. Speech output identifies each image in French and English. Grolier's Encyclopedia also runs on this CD-ROM, as do audio CDs. Atari has a task force at work now developing more products for this player, which will be available at computer specialty dealers and retail outlets in February, 1988, at a suggested retail price of \$599.

DO ATARI DESKTOP PUBLISHING

G.O. Graphics, in conjunction with Atari, will bring to market a sophisticated desktop publishing program called Deskset. This works as a front end to the CompuGraphics typesetting equipment, offering the use of 1,800 fonts. This is not just a desktop publishing program for four-page newsletters and the like: it could design entire publications such as Antic and START. It will output to such laser printers as the striking Atari laser printer, also being demonstrated with Deskset. (Look for the next Comdex installment for additional desktop publishing programs for the ST.) Deskset, which works only on a Mega, will work within the GEM environment and

offers all the standard features of the most sophisticated desktop publishing programs -- features such as character compensation, kerning, columns, boxes, rules and the ability to merge text and graphics. Look for this product mid- to late 1988.

AND. . . ATARI PCS

The Atari PC1, introduced earlier this year, can be used as a local area network workstation or as a standalone personal computer. It runs at a top speed of 8 Mhz, with a software switch to set the clock speed to 4.77 when needed. The PC1 works with any CGA, MDA, EGA or multi-frequency monitor. Maximum color screen resolution is 640 X 350. The PC1 has a 64-color palette, with a maximum of 16 on the screen at a time. It is expected to retail at \$800.

New to the Atari PC family is the PC2, a dual-speed XT compatible with five slots and hard-disk support. The PC4 is an 80286 microprocessor-based IBM PC/AT compatible machine. It has clock speeds of either 8 or 12 Mhz, VGA-compatible video, four AT-style expansion slots, up to one megabyte of system RAM and is ready for an 80287 numeric coprocessor.

Additionally, Atari is announcing "Moses PromiseLAN," a local area network that can connect up to 17 PCs using off-the-shelf telephone wire. They will also be developing Moses PromiseLAN adaptors for its Mega and ST computers. Thus, the Mega and Atari laser printer will be able to share data with PCs and Apple Macintoshes.

COMING NEXT UPDATE. . .

Watch for more third-party desktop publishing programs from Soft Logik, Timeworks, Migraph. . . Multiuser, Multitasking programs with the Idris operating system. . . desktop video from Antic Software. . . products galore from MichTron, Spectrum Holobyte, Word Perfect, Abacus, ISD Marketing, B.E.S.T. and lots more.

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ST SOFTWARE SHINES AT COMDEX:

Multi-user, Multitasking on the Mega

By Anita Malnig, START Editor

Las Vegas, November 3 --

At the very crowded Atari press conference at the Desert Inn on Monday, November 1, Atari announced its entrance into the serious business market with an array of multi-user, multitasking products. The Atari booth itself was crowded with exciting products, interested spectators and busy software personnel. Here's a run-down of what we saw at the Atari booth.

MULTI-USER, MULTI-TASKING

Along with high-quality third-party developers, Atari will offer multiuser, multitasking and serious vertical applications on the Mega using a Unix-like operating system called Idris (developed by Whitesmiths Ltd.). The company, Computer Tools, was and still is instrumental in finding companies whose programs can be ported over from the Unix environment to Idris and porting those programs.

Jefferson Software is now releasing a version of their Modula-2 Development System for the Mega to run under Idris, offering a powerful language to complement the multi-user, multitasking operating system.

American Network's Cash Register Plus, the first of the multiuser, multitasking applications, is a point-of-sale program that lets you store and search up to 3,000 items.

It supports a Star 8340 printer -- small to print out receipts -- and an actual cash drawer. It includes a customer and inventory database and backs up all information to disk. It can support four terminals with all cables attached to the Mega. This is expected to be on sale mid-January 1988 for about \$700 for all the components.

During your inventory search, you may want to do some word processing. There are several word processors to choose from in this Idris environment. From the Tigera Corporation comes Word Era, a feature-rich, high-performance word processing package on single- and multiuser systems. It has a Wang-compatible interface and document conversion capabilities. Word Era has the features of leading word processing software, and more, including a window

French, German, Italian and Spanish, and supports a four-user system. Available during the first quarter of 1988, the multiuser price begins at \$895.

Another word processor is CrystalWriter Plus from Syntactics, providing a library of model documents for frequently used formats such as letters, memos and reports. An organization can define its own "style sheet" for documents. The program has "plain English" commands and can be useful for writers, editors, secretaries, managers and engineers.

Also ported from the Unix world is Lex, a combined word processor and database, from Trajectory Software. Its indexed file structure lets you retrieve the 10,000th record as quickly as the first. You can design your own forms and screen layouts, create short and more extensive glossary items, and do list processing and mail merges. It also comes with a built-in calculator which you can use concurrently as you write or edit. Also available is Lexet, which lets you interface the word processor and database with laser printers.

Atari Corp. is handling the networking capabilities through an agreement with Network Research Corp. With FUSION, Network Software will give the Atari Mega a complete set of TCP/IP protocols and allocations which have been tested for compliance with DDN/DARPA Internet Protocol specifications.

MORE DESKTOP PUBLISHING

From Timeworks comes the Timeworks Desktop Publisher ST. Retailing for \$129.95 this GEM-based program will offer WYSIWYG display, over 1,200 possible type-style combinations, ability to import graphics, and laser printer compatibility. Desktop Publisher ST will be available in the first quarter of 1988.

Soft Logik Corp. announced a new version of its desktop publishing program, Publishing Partner Professional. New features include automatic textflow around graphic images, automatic hyphenation and kerning, the ability to import documents from other word processors such as WordPerfect, First Word and Word Writer, more fonts and font manipulation. It will retail for \$149.95.

From ISD Marketing comes Calamus, a page-layout and typesetting application. It allows outline fonts and vector graphics that

Calamus uses these features on both the printer and screen. The screen output can be enlarged up to laser printer resolution. The program offers a spelling checker and hyphenated dictionary, object-oriented graphics, chart forms, and font editors using Bezier curves for designing or changing fonts. Calamus for the Mega will be available in December 1987 for \$349.95.

MichTron offers GFA Publisher, a GEM-controlled program with full-featured text editor, automatic text flow and paging, expandable font library and an integrated driver for PostScript.

From Migraph comes the supercharged Easy Draw. And Supercharger, a companion product to Easy Draw, makes it easy to load graphics from popular paint programs. While not a desktop publishing program, these two combined products let you create newsletters, reports, brochures, etc. You can work with ASCII files, have justified and non-justified text, use onscreen grids and rulers and output to the Atari laser printer.

LET'S EMULATE

Turn your ST into a Mac with The Magic Sac Professional from Data Pacific. The Professional consists of three products: The Magic Sac Plus, the Translator One and the Magic Epson Printer Driver. The Translator One allows the existing Atari disk drive to read and write Apple Macintosh disks and convert data between Mac, ST and IBM PC diskette formats. The Professional is shipping this month with a suggested retail price of \$449.95. Typical Mac programs you can run are Macpaint, Macdraw, Excel and Pagemaker.

PC-Ditto is a software-only utility which taps the power of your Atari ST to imitate an IBM PC XT. Programs you can run include Lotus 1-2-3, Enable, Sidekick, Framework and Symphony.

WORD PROCESSING -- ALIVE AND WELL

WordPerfect for the ST is out and is called by some the Cadillac of word processors. In addition to a built-in thesaurus and spell-checker, the program has math functions and can create indexes, and tables of contents. There are also macros, merge functions and onscreen columns. The product is shipping now for about \$395 list.

From Microsoft comes the long-awaited Write, marketed by Atari Corp. It handles complex business reports as well as memos and letters. It has all the standard text generation, editing and formatting features such as cut-and-paste, creating footnotes, automatic pagination, different font styles and sizes, and it works in conjunction with the Atari Laser printer.

MORE CAD PROGRAMS

Drafix, from Foresight Resources, is now on the market and drawing critical acclaim. It's identical to the 1.00 IBM PC version, supports pen plotters, and runs on color and monochrome Atari monitors.

Coming soon from Migraph is M/CADD, a professional engineering graphics design system for the Atari Mega. M/CADD outputs directly to HPGL-compatible plotters and saves in GEM format for output on 9- and 24-pin dot-matrix printers. M/CADD files can be loaded into Migraph's Easy Draw, and you can add more text and either bit-mapped or object-oriented graphics. Suggested price is \$499. M/CADD should ship the end of November.

With MichTron's Master CAD, you can produce object in 2-D and 3-D using its exclusive concepts of Projection Planes. It uses pull-down menus, dialog boxes, mouse and very few keyboard commands. Expect to see this in early 1988.

DESKTOP VIDEO

From Antic Software in conjunction with Sony comes a desktop video package. Sony's low-cost 8mm video hardware and Antic's video sequencer software create professional-quality 3-D computer-graphics videotapes of up to two hours. The Antic software controls nine functions of the Sony VCR, then adds its own special visual effects such as fades and auto assemble/editing. The 8mm video sequencing software (including custom parallel cables) will be available in January 1988 from Antic Software. The Sony video equipment is available from Sony.

MORE GRAPHIC FUN

From Neriki Computer Graphics PTY Ltd. in Australia comes the ZImagemaster, software with a hardware box to attach to your ST. Hooking up the Polaroid Palette can output DEGAS pictures as Polaroid pictures, and you can hook up a 35mm camera to the Palette. The package yields overhead

transparencies and printouts. It will retail for \$400.

Antic Software is also showing Spectrum 512, its 512-color paint program, which expands the ST's normally limited palette of 16 colors to 512. Spectrum 512 can load and enhance pictures from existing ST software as well as from Amiga picture files. Available now for \$69.95.

Animation comes from Antic Software as well with Cyber Paint, also \$69.95. It emulates the functions of a \$100,000 Quantel Paintbox -- but for computer graphics instead of live video. Cyber Paint is a member of the Cyber family of desktop video products. Its many features include smooth raster tweening along any 3-D path, professional optic effects with planar rotations through 3-D space, and moviola-style cut-and-paste.

MORE BUSINESS BITS

The Informer from Regent Software is a multi-table database with presentation graphics. Easy-to-use point and click functions let you create and manipulate up to four databases at once. You can import graphics from DEGAS and NEOchrome...

From SBT comes the Database Accounting Library, menu-driven with options to confirm, change or cancel entries... Hi-Tech Advisors announces Super Sales Pro, a full-featured point-of-sale inventory control software system for the ST. It will accommodate medium- to larger-sized wholesale, retail or mail order businesses. The company will provide free technical support... From Progressive Peripherals comes Superbase Personal, a relational database, and the Logistik time/project management system... B.E.S.T Inc. offers B.E.S.T. Business Management, an integrated accounting system offering general ledger. Available now, suggested retail price is \$395... ISD Marketing, which brings you the well-known VIP, now has the MasterPlan financial spreadsheet featuring the GEM environment with pull-down menus, icons, scroll bars and column grabbers. It offers graphics features as well.

Also from ISD is an update to STAccounts, the integrated accounting package... From Royal Software comes additional low-cost business programs such as Help Calc, templates for their E-A Calc and VIP. Coming soon will be Inventory Master for \$99.95.

ADAP 2, the digital editing system. ADAP 2 works directly with a hard disk. Also just released is Easy Score, Hybrid Arts' new scoring program.

NEW HARD DRIVE

In mid-December ICD will ship its new 100 megabyte hard disk for \$1,699.

Well, I reckon that little lot of news direct from ComDex on the Atari happenings should get a few people talking?

Now, I guess to finish up this column, I could continue the software news.....

Mindscape (US), are releasing 3 new games, **DEJA VU**, **UNINVITED**, and **SHADOWGATE**. The first two are ports from the Macintosh while Shadowgate, yet to come, you are the last of a line of ancient Kings, able to destroy the evil warlock and thwart his plans to raise the titan Behemoth!

From Aquatic Productivity Group (US) comes **WIZZARD**, a fully integrated relational data base, word processor, auto scheduler and auto dialer.

Northern Design Systems (Canada) have an advanced engineering design and drafting package called **SYMMETRY**. This appears to be a full-featured CADD program with interactive 2D and 3D modes and 255 selectable layers.

In the music area again, Intelligent Music (US) have a new program called **M**. (Yes just M). M is an intelligent music instrument, a composing and performing program allowing you to work in 3 stages - First specify basic musical material as notes and chords. Second, determine the ways that your basic material will be transformed and then, Thirdly you perform the music by manipulating screen controls, or playing control keys on a MIDI keyboard or by 'conducting' with the mouse in a multi-directional grid. \$200US.

Quiet Lion (US) have a full featured 16 track sequencer called **MU-SCRIPT 1**,

overdub, edit, enter, playback, and print your creations. \$99.95US. Also announced is **CAT TRACKS 1** a 16-track sequencer with no scoring, and **MU-SCRIPT 2/3** with expanded features.

Origin Systems (UK) announce the imminent release of **MOEBIUS** a role-playing and swordplay/martial arts package. Various levels of difficulty and challenge feature in which you are required to survive ninja-like assassins.

Elite (UK), plan on releasing the classic board game **BATTLESHIPS** for the ST soon. Looks like being quite good.

From Advance (UK), who are betting on a 16bit scene in 88, will come their first ST game **BUTCH HARD GUY**.

14.95UK. No other details as yet.

ACE 2 is due shortly from Cascade Games (UK) for 19.95UK. This offers head-to-head conflict with high-speed 1 or 2 pilot action. The computer opponent has AI at 20 skill levels and comprehensive options. Air-air and air-ground combat/ realtime realspace action/ 2 aircraft types and a variety of modern missiles feature.

One of the greatest arcade games of the year from Taito, **BUBBLE BOBBLE** is being prepared for early release by Firebird Software (UK) for 19.95UK. Blow, bounce and bob your way into oblivion!

System 3 (UK) are coming up with 'the best cartoon game of the year' for the ST with **BANGKOK KNIGHTS**

24.99UK.

From Systems Architect (UK) will come a very impressive fast arcade-action with icon-controlled elements called **ANCIENT MARINER**. They are also doing **DIMENSION45**. I've got to stop soon. From CRL (UK) is **ACADEMY**, while from Virgin Games (UK) is coming **DAN DARE: PILOT OF THE FUTURE**. Imagine (UK) are set to release **RENEGADE** 19.95UK.

Well that's it for this month - should give you plenty to look forward to? ☆

SUPER PRODUCTS

07-8011218

07-8011218

8 BIT SALE CONTINUES!

8 BIT SALE CONTINUES!

YES, the reduced prices on all Atari 8 bit upgrades has proven so popular that we've decided to continue these indefinitely. Here is a recap for those who are new to the Super Products range:

SUPERMON ADDS REAL POWER to all models. Complete disassembler/debugger ALWAYS available to you. Built in graphics dump utility allows printing of almost anything on the screen, graphics, text or mixed. Built in binary loader handles any binary file. Hex/dac and Dec/hex conversion, automatic density seeking and access to up to 4 drives. Direct sector oriented disk access and powerful search and debugger features. XL owners can forget the Translator disk, as Supermon does the job for them. Allows switching between Supermon and the original operating system.

PRINT MON IS IDENTICAL IN ALL its functions to Supermon, but drives your printer through joystick port 2 with a \$45.- interface. Compatible with ALL programs except Paper Clip.

SUPERFACE IS THE LITTLE interface to your printer to go with Printmon. Look at the price of a standard interface and realise that at this rate you end up with a FREE Supermon.

Prices for these items are:

SUPERMON + PRINT MON XL \$80.-
SUPERMON + PRINT MON 800 \$59.-
SUPERFACE all models \$45.-

superdos has been made available free of charge through your local User group.

PLEASE INCLUDE \$3.- FOR P+P PER COMPLETE ORDER.

APOLOGIES TO ST OWNERS.

To those of you who are interested in the SUPERMON for the ST, we apologise for the delay in making this available. From a simple debugger tool it has grown into a total tool kit, with full disk doctor facilities, diagnosis routines, developers tracer, debugger and restorer, unique search facilities and a host of other features. As it is, we still expect to have it available before Christmas, but please contact us before ordering.

PLEASE MAKE CHERQUES PAYABLE TO: W. VISSER.

SUPERMAX

HAVE YOU HEARD that the new Atari disk drives will be double density and high speed? Well, no need to wait for those or spend lots of money changing drives. Supermax converts your 1050 to TRUE double density, and QUADRUPLES the Baud rate, resulting in a loading rate up to 3 times as fast. The Original Adventure, a very long Basic program loads in 10.5 seconds. Easy to install, it comes with instructions and at these prices is a MUST. Just think how many spare disks you'll have after converting to double density.

SUPERRAM IS WHAT SEPERATES the men from the boys. Expands your XL to 256K, your 800 to a whopping 288K. The 800 system is Axlon ramdisk compatible, the XLs are 130XE compatible. No need to look for that second disk drive now. Anything 2 drives can do, you can do with one drive and Superram. Simple installation, full instructions. The 800 version requires a 16K board sent in for upgrading.

SUPER800 XL EMULATOR

Allows you to run those 64K programs not normally possible on the 800. Adds 16K of static RAM, two operating systems with Supermon. Runs most 64K programs such as Bounty Bob, the Eldolon etc.

SUPER800 XL Emulator \$130.-
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800XL \$85.- 600 XL \$100.-
SUPERDOS available at only \$5.-

Reprinted from Astun, July 1987

Polymarkers are pre-defined graphics shapes that GEM allows you to print to the screen by giving only one coordinate pair. You don't have to establish the corners or boundaries of the shape to place a relatively complex shape on the screen. GEM does all that automatically.

For BASIC programmers that makes a handy way to use relatively complex shapes in game programming. Such shapes as squares or diamonds can be printed to the screen in any of four sizes with no more than two values - and sometimes only one - to change to move it around the screen or place it in user-selected locations.

Polymarkers also make handy marks for menu items to be selected by the mouse. Future columns will cover using the mouse. I have used polymarkers as building blocks for more complex graphic items. For instance, I used square polymarkers in conjunction with periods to construct graphic dice for a game of chance.

The program lines for polymarker routines will be among the longest we'll cover in this series. That's because we must have routines to change the shape, the size and the location of the polymarkers.

The routines are set up so that you can select a shape by simply calling a subroutine by the name of the shape. An example would be GOSUB SQUARE to get a square polymarker. The same holds true for the size of the markers. The only time you must literally assign a value to a variable is when you are providing coordinates for the marker to be printed to the screen.

Here are the program lines:

```
10 DOT:mtype=1:goto markertype
20 PLUS:mtype=2:goto markertype
30 ASTERISK:mtype=3:goto markertype
40 SQUARE:mtype=4:goto markertype
50 CROSSBUCK:mtype=5:goto markertype
60 DIAMOND:mtype=6
70 MARKERTYPE:poke contrl,18:poke contrl+2,0:poke contrl+6,1
80 poke intin,mtype:VDISYS(0):RETURN
90 SMARK:sizemark=12:goto markersize
100 RMARK:sizemark+24:goto markersize
110 LMARK:sizemark=36:goto markersize
120 XLMARK:sizemark=48
130 MARKERSIZE:poke contrl,19:poke contrl+2,1:poke contrl+6,0
140 poke ptsin,0:poke ptsin+2,sizemark:VDISYS(0)
150 MARKER:poke contrl,7:poke contrl+2,1:poke ptsin,markx
160 poke ptsin+2,marky-int(sizemark/4):VDISYS(0):RETURN
```

Descriptions of the six types of markers:

GOSUB DOT calls up a one pixel dot (the only polymarker for which the size cannot change).

GOSUB PLUS makes a plus sign (+).

GOSUB ASTERISK makes a standard asterisk shape (*).

GOSUB SQUARE makes a square.

GOSUB CROSSBUCK makes a diagonal cross shape like the crossbuck shape on railroad crossing signs.

GOSUB DIAMOND makes a diamond shape with a horizontal orientation. After you call one of these marker shapes you must specify a marker

size. The available sizes are as follows:

GOSUB SMARK makes the marker one-half the size of a character on the screen.

GOSUB RMARK makes a marker the same size as a default character on the screen.

GOSUB LMARK makes a marker one and one-half the size of a default character.

GOSUB SLMARK makes a marker two times the size of a default character.

To make the size routines easier to remember for programming, I've named them after clothes sizes: S(mall) mark, R(egular)mark, L(arge)mark and X(tra)L(arge)mark.

The size routines also automatically place marker on the screen, so you must specify a coordinate point for the marker before you call one of the size routines. The variables for that are "markx" and "marky".

Here's an example of creating a double-sized (tall as two lines of characters) polymarker shaped like a diamond:

```
10 markx=40:marky=120:GOSUB DIAMOND:GOSUB XLMARK
```

Note the order in which the various parts of the routine are called or referenced. First: the coordinates are set as pixel values on the screen with variables markx and marky. Second: the shape of the marker is called. Third: the size of the marker is called and it is automatically placed on the screen in the specified location. It's important that these steps be followed in order. If you were, for instance, to call the size first your system would possibly crash because not enough values would be assigned to variables in the GEM routines.

Once the attributes of the polymarker are set they remain the same until specifically changed later. I mentioned the possibility of crashing the system. It is important all-around to be very careful when typing in the program lines provided in this series of columns. GEM VDI and AES routines are extremely sensitive. I honestly think they like crashing - the demolition derby nuts of the Atari world.

In the next column we'll develop some routines for reading the mouse and look at a couple of algorithms for using those routines.

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF 2 NOVEMBER 1987

7:50 Meeting opens.

Welcome from Neil Patterson. Apologies from Peter Leich.

There are now 61 current members of the A.A.C.C.

A comment from Tony Willmot. The ST special price of \$999 for the 520ST-FM and the Monochrome monitor (the SM125) will continue till the 19th Nov. Word Perfect for the Atari ST is \$600.

8:00 Questions from the audience to Tony.

Q. The availability of Blitter?

A. It will be in the mega's. The Mega ST's will arrive in Nov.

The Laser Printer price when in stock, will be approx \$3,500.

There are now 12 new XF551 8-bit disk drives in S.A.

1st Word plus will be in any day now.

No PC2's will arrive until next year.

The price of Publishing Partner is \$360 and is in stock in Sydney. The Abacus range of products is also in Sydney.

If you're looking for PC DITTO and cannot obtain it in S.A try to source it from a Victorian Dealer.

An Atari BBS is to be set up soon in Sydney. All the files from there will be transferred to ours in Adelaide.

Atari have allowed Brian Petersson to sell components, and Club members may ask for assistance from him if needed. He will also help in the 8-bit range of products. NOTE: this assistance will be available only at the main Club meetings.

Norm's ST Public Domain disks are still at no. 169. Ibas, North East and Highbury still have a good range of ST titles to choose from.

Dick Smith have said that they WILL sell 300 130XE computers before Christmas.

No new magazines tonight.

M.A.C.E items still for sale (8-bit).

It costs \$15 to join Micro Accesories BBS. (it has the A.A.C.C SIG on it for us.)

General Business.

Norm has 2 copies of Flight Simulator 2 (\$30) and Microsoft Basic (\$10) to sell.

8:42 Meeting Closed.

ST NEW PRODUCTS

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PIRACY ON THE HIGH SEAS

Yo ho ho -- Pirates of the Barbary Coast puts you on a trading frigate in the late 18th century. You're the captain, and you're searching for the ruthless Bloodthroat -- who has your daughter in his oily grasp. In order to raise the ransom and rescue her, you must trade in the various Barbary Coast seaport towns. Along the way, you also might find buried treasure on one of four possible islands. The only thing missing is a bottle of rum and a parrot shrieking "Pieces of eight!" \$US24.95. TDC Distributors Inc./Starsoft Development, 3331 Bartlett Blvd., Orlando, FL 32811. (305) 423-1987.

FROM KASPAROV TO SARGON

Chessmaster 2000, with more than 71,000 opening positions, contains the largest opening move library available for a computer chess game. The game provides 12 levels of play, teach and hint modes, and the ability to retract moves -- all the way back to the beginning of the game. The Chessmaster 2000 library contains 100 famous games, such as the Kasparov/Karpov championships or even the Chessmaster 2000 vs. Sargon III battle of 1986. US\$44.95. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404. (415) 571-7171.

THREE FROM REEVE

The ASCII- and DEGAS-compatible News Station ST (\$34.95) features text entry and graphics modes, clip art, an undo command and adjustable margins and line spacing. Disk Master (\$29.95) features a powerful sector editor, backup utility, custom formatter and a graphics display that shows you exactly what your disk drive sees. Finally, colorful graphics and realistic action on a 3-D ice rink is what you can expect in World Class Hockey (\$US29.95). Reeve Software, 29W150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville, IL 60555. (312) 393-2317.

A MILLION FROM MICHTRON

GFA Draft (\$US99.50), a two-dimensional CAD program, makes it easy to create circuits, scaled drawings and detailed plans. You can have 255 drawing layers (and display up to 10 at once) and two styles of variable sized/directioned text, or print or plot in different colors and densities. Other features include Measure, Enlarge, Reduce and Rotate commands.

MichTron's TRIMbase (\$150) data management system lets you handle large amounts of data, enter names, addresses, personal or business details, and generate custom reports, both as tables and as free text. The program also provides special relational functions for cross-file interactions: condense, break up, merge, subtract and join files.

In Journey to the Lair, adapted from the arcade game Dragon's Lair, you'll help Dirk the Daring try to save Princess Daphne. The Dragon's Lair disk is \$US29.95, as is the video laser cable, but the entire package costs \$US49.95.

Karate Kid II (\$US39.95), based on the film, pits Daniel against increasingly powerful opponents. Features include one or two-player options, a MIDI-compatible soundtrack, joystick or keyboard options and realistic sound effects. Four dozen trivia cards -- half with questions, half with answers -- are displayed face down on the desktop.

You have to flip over two cards at a time trying to find the Perfect Match (\$US39.95). The game features eleven categories, from sports to

If you think about it, what else could R.A.I.D. (\$US39.95) be but a program debugger? Features include a mini-assembler/disassembler, full screen editing capability, tracer options, copy, fill and move block commands, breakpoints you can reset and two screen displays to keep program and debugging activity isolated.

Shuttle II (\$US39.95) is -- what else? a space shuttle simulator. Control the shuttle while docking an orbiting satellite. Manoeuvre the astronaut while he makes repairs and takes the satellite back to the shuttle for further inspection, then fly the shuttle back to Earth and land.

Match Point (\$US39.95) simulates every aspect of tennis with accurate graphics and scoring, as well as a 3-D playing screen. With three levels of play. Match Point features a stadium full of fans, line judges, a score board --even ball boys. Use your mouse, joystick or keyboard to play.

Perhaps the most exciting new MichTron product is the Realtizer digitizer (\$US199.95 -- originally the Print-Technik Video Digitizer), which allows color and 16-gray-level images and lets you load and save pictures in NEOchrome and DEGAS formats.

When you're done with all these products, organize them with Super Directory (\$US39.95), which reads your disk directories, recording their files, lengths and other attributes. Add personal comments and categories, sort, display and print organized directoy lists. A disk library can hold 9,000 entries. MichTron, 576 South Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053. (313) 334-5700.

MUSIC SEQUENCER

MIDIsoft Studio, a flexible, easy-to-use line between the ST and any MIDI-equipped instrument, features fast real-time record, playback, overdub,rewind and fast-forward. It has 32 independently controlled polyphonic tracksand a capacity of more than 80,000 notes per song, and you can record or playfrom any point in the piece using autolocate. \$US99. Passport Designs, Inc. 625 Miramontes Street, Suite 103, Half MoonBay, CA 94019. (415) 726-0280.

CHILL, THEN SERVE WITH SILICON CHIPS

FTL's Micro Cookbook has hundreds of recipes and a complete cooking database program that can search and retrieve recipes by ingredient, category and more. The program can give suggestions for leftovers or new entrees, and you can add your own recipes. Features include menu planning, portion sizing, calorie control and automatic preparation of shopping lists. \$US49.95. FTL, 6160 Lusk Blvd., C-206. San Diego, CA 92121. (619) 453-5711.

GRAPHIC ARTIST 1.52

The new version of Graphic Artist provides a print queue and includes more printer and plotter drivers, as well as improved driver editors that let you support virtually any dot-matrix printer (including 24-pin printers, but excluding color printers printing in multiple colors), laser printers (except Postscript) and plotters. Also, the last mouse coordinates typed are displayed when new coordinates are typed in. Other features include improved pathname syntax checking, printing tips and more precise text margin alignments. \$US199.95. Progressive Computer Applications, Inc., 2002 McAuliffe Drive, Rockville, MD 20851. (301) 340-8398.

THREE CLASSIC COURSES

The Famous Course Disk: Volume II features three of the most difficult courses in the world: Turnberry in Scotland, the Inerness Club in Ohio

and Harbour Town in South Carolina. for use with Accolade's Mean 18 golf simulation. \$US19.95. Accolade, 20833 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino, CA 95014. (408) 446-5757.

ST APPLICATIONS, UTILITIES & GAMES

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THREE FROM MICHTRON

Bone up on your knowledge of the Isles of Langerhans, frog-eating contests and toe exhibitions in the fast-paced, none-too-easy Trivia Challenge. Nearly, 1000 questions range from international sports to the arts to pop music to science to general knowledge.

Backup! copies your hard disk files to floppies and back again, minimizing the risk of loss. The fast, specialized routines help the program orchestrate the entire backup procedure for you, so there's no reason not to make backups.

Enjoy hours of creative pleasure with the Pinball Factory as you design, build and edit your own screens. Choose from several bumpers, tabs and other devices, and place them anywhere you like, to get the action just right. Commands include Draw, Line, Ray, Frame, Box, Circle, Detail (to magnify small areas), Airbrush and Shadow. Change any of the ST's 16 palette colors -- even change the rules: alter gravity, bounce, scoring, bumper strength and tab bonuses. Play three balls at once. \$US39.95 each. MichTron Inc., 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053. (313) 334-5700.

HISOFT BASIC COMPILER, DEVPAC ST AND SAVED!

The ST BASIC-compatible HiSoft BASIC Compiler (about \$US20) has a GEM-driven editor and executes compiled programs up to 30 times faster than when they're interpreted. Programs can be as big as your computer will allow, and you can call assembly language and C functions. Complete graphics support includes multiple windows, and strings can be 16Mb long.

Devpac ST (\$US79.95) combines a full 68000 macroassembler that can assemble source code at 30,000 lines per minute, a full screen editor with a comprehensive range of search-and-replace commands, a powerful disassembler and debugger that uses its own screen memory and drivers so you can debug graphics programs easily, and a fast linker.

Saved! (\$US49) is mainly a desk accessory that lets you delete, rename and copy files, get information on a file or disk, or copy or format disks and print text files. You can set the path used to find executable programs, and Saved! can look for other drives and other directories. HiSoft, The Old School, Greenfield, Bedford MK45 5DE, England. +44 525 718181.

ACCOUNTS, INVOICING, INVENTORY CONTROL

Execon's Accounts is a fully-integrated modular business system (about \$250 in English pounds) consisting of Set-up, Accounts Receivable and Payable, General Ledger, Trial Balance and Forecasting. The menu-driven Invoicing/Order Processing (\$US150) system can stand alone or integrate fully with other modules and allows automatic transfer of data between modules. With the Inventory Control System (\$150) you can use the two-bin system, where in as soon as one bin is empty, supplies

review method, in which stock levels are reviewed at set periods or dates, allowing for all orders from one supplier to be made together; or there-order level method, where a minimum stock level is set and stock is re-ordered as soon as that level is reached. Maximum file size for all Execon programs is 32,000 units, and you can configure your hardware to your own requirements. Execon Limited, 143-145 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, London W13 9AV, England. 01-567 6288.

THUNDER! FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED

Batteries Included's Thunder! now lets people with impaired hearing to use the program's real-time spelling checker. Instead of beeping, the new version of Thunder! alerts you by blinking the screen. Now you can see when a spelling error has been detected. This special version is available free with the return of the original disk. Batteries Included, 30 Mural Street, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 1B5, Canada. (416) 881-9941.

QUIZAM

You are the commander of a U.S. space shuttle flight, and your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to dispose of eight useless satellites. Malfunctions and automatic defense systems hinder your progress, and the satellites beam strange, obscure -- even trivial -- questions at you. Answer these to capture the satellites in this newfangled trivia game, or provide your own questions and categories. \$US54.95. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404. (415) 571-7171.

DOLLARS AND SENSE

Monogram's best-selling personal finance package, Dollars and Sense, sets up five different types of record-keeping: assets, liabilities, expenses, income and checking. Recently ported over to the ST, the system supports unlimited transactions in each category. It can also produce a wide variety of reports and graphs for screen or printer. The non-copy-protected program supports hard disk drives and provides two levels of online help screens. \$US99.95. Monogram, 8295 S. La Cienega Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90301. (213) 215-0355.

SPACE QUEST

In this science fiction parody (with 3-D graphics), you control the main character, Roger Wilco, as he works his way from sanitation engineer to space-age swashbuckler and lone space hero. Direct Roger through more than 60 animated scenes of spaceship interiors, alien landscapes and deep space. \$US49.95. Sierra On-Line Inc., P.O. Box 485, Coarsegold, CA 93614. (209) 683-6858.

LASERTYPE

Softlab's LaserType takes full advantage of the Hewlett Packard LaserJet+ printer and gives smooth graphics and full typesetting capabilities. Select from 20 different screens and tones for column headings, backgrounds or graphic designing, and control 16 type styles and sizes. \$US279. Softlab, P.O. Box 879, St. George, UT 84770. (801) 628-5400.

FORE*STAR AND PAYDAY

Fore*Star integrates General Ledger, the Financial Modeler spreadsheet, a word processor and Portfolio, a financial report print sequencer, all for less than \$100. General Ledger account balances and historical balances are directly available for use within spreadsheets, and the General Ledger module features up to 32 independent journals and 512 accounts. The word processor has insert/delete, cut & paste and search-and-replace features. The Portfolio module links desired spreadsheet templates and word processor

text documents in virtually any order.

PayDay (\$US69.95), is designed for small to medium-sized businesses, handling an annual payroll of \$21 million for up to 255 employees. A built-in user configuration utility lets PayDay adapt to almost any payroll situation in any state. Two time card entry modes and context-sensitive online help are available. Crystal Software, P.O. Box 803, Merlin, OR 97532. (503) 479-9516.

DRAFIX 1

This inexpensive, full-featured CAD program features automatic dimensioning, snap modes, layering, and transform/copy commands. Drafix 1 offers a second-generation user interface that has all menus visible all the time -- you don't need to memorize menu hierarchies. \$149.95. Foresight Resources Corp., 932 Massachusetts, Lawrence, KS 66044. (913) 841-1121.

ANIMATOR ST

Animator ST from Aegis uses a concept called "tweening" to control the movement of objects during an animation, breaking it up into manageable units. You can create objects within the program and, for instance, change a pyramid into a star by dragging the points of the pyramid to the proper positions. When that tween is replayed, Animator ST creates all the in-between positions of the shape. The program also features color-cycling, in which repetitive movements can be animated, and cels created in NEOchrome can be page-flipped. \$US79.95. Aegis Development, 2210 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 277, Santa Monica, CA 90403. (213) 392-6445.

LDW BASIC COMPILER, VERSION 1.1

Along with improved packaging and an updated manual, the LDW BASIC Compiler now has faster screen output, an enhanced GEM environment, multiline statements and improved runtime error-handling. Arithmetic functions are four times faster and compilation is up to 70% faster than version 1.0. \$US69.95 (\$US25 for registered users of version 1.0). Logical Design Works Inc., 780 Montague Expressway, Suite 205, San Jose, CA 95131. (408) 435-1445.

FOR SALE

Atari Computer..... 800XL
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Only \$200 - O.N.O.

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EUROPE'S THREE SEPTEMBER ATARI SHOWS

In September I attended major computer shows in Dusseldorf, Amsterdam and London. Atari was very well represented at each one. I saw the new Atari \$US500CD ROM player, and I heard Atari announce their own transputer for the ST was being developed at Cambridge University.

The strongest of all Atari national organizations is Atari Germany. They do a wonderful job, and the ST's doing very well there. Also, the Atari 8-bit is moving into Eastern Europe very well. (The 16-bit ST is not allowed to be sold in Eastern Europe.) The Eastern European developers certainly are as good as their Western counterparts, but they don't make the same kind of money. Therefore, you can get some excellent development relatively cheaply. They're as interested and as challenged by the whole concept as our own programmers.

It was a very successful three-day show in Dusseldorf, which is at the center of a very large section of the German population. The ST has been very well received in the university and scientific communities. Antic is very well known there, and START is becoming known. I saw a lot of ST hardware for laboratories, good desktop publishing, graphics, a lot of languages for the ST, everything from Prolog to APL -- there was even Smalltalk.

In Amsterdam I attended a show that's basically the equivalent of COMDEX. The Netherlands has a very large ST organization, as well as 8-bit. Atari had a large booth there, and a good show. It was successful all around. Basically it was a business show, and the likes of IBM and Xerox were there.

But the real highlight of the trip was the Personal Computer World (PCW) Show in London's Olympia Hall -- very reminiscent of CES. There was a ton of activity, crowds of enthusiastic people, many video screens displaying software, promotions, etc.

The Atari is now moving into Scandinavia and Italy very successfully. There are about 150,000 STs in Germany and 30,000 to 50,000 in both France and the UK, with Italy, Scandinavia and the Netherlands coming in behind that. In Europe, Atari isn't so much saddled with the image of being a game machine. It's the most successful home computer in Germany in terms of sales.

But I did see a lot of video input/output devices: scanners, digitizers, plotters, lots of different printing stuff -- there seemed to be lots of hardware development going on. There was also a floating point processor and more business software.

I ran into many old friends at PCW: from Microprose, Activision, Electronic Arts -- all the big names here were over there. But once again, Antic began attending the European shows well before many of these companies. Since I first went, the PCW show has grown into a booming event. The booths are all two stories, and the people are very enthusiastic.

The UK market is developing nicely, and the UK Atari group is doing well. The Tramiels have kept the equivalent prices -- that is, a price of \$US1,000 here is the equivalent of \$1,000 over there after the exchange rate is applied. That has really enhanced the sales.

A lot of games were shown at PCW on many, many different pieces of

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